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1. MoS for Education Subhash Sarkar confers National Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22 (Nov. 19, 2022)

National Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22

Minister of State for Education **Dr Subhash Sarkar** on 19 November, 2022 conferred **National Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22 in Akashwani Bhawan, Delhi.**

Important facts

- A total of 39 schools have been given this award, including **five in the national category and 34 in the overall category.**
- The winners of the national category were given **Rs 60,000 and the other categories were given Rs 20,000.**
- The National Commission Committee has selected these schools for the awards.
- The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar has been instituted by the **Ministry of Education** to recognize excellence in water, healthcare and sanitation in schools.
- The awards were presented to rural and urban government schools, government aided schools and private schools.
- Drinking water, toilets, handwashing with soap, operation and maintenance, capacity building and COVID-19 (preparedness and response) parameters have been used to measure the performance of schools.
- **In 2014, the Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV) initiative** was launched to ensure that all schools in India have access to separate functional toilets for boys and girls.

About National Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar

- It has been established by the **Ministry of Education** to recognise, inspire and celebrate excellence in **cleanliness and hygiene** practices in schools.
- The main objective of the award is to honour those schools which have taken steps to fulfil the requirement of **Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan.**
- The award is based on IT-enabled assessment of WASH infrastructure, hygienic practices and COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.
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2. India launches official website of SCO 2023 with a theme of 'For a SECURE SCO' (Nov. 19, 2022)

India launches official website of SCO 2023

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has launched the official website of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with the theme of a SECURE SCO. The website will highlight the events that will be undertaken under the chairmanship of India next year.

During the [22nd Head of State summit meeting 2022](#) of the SCO at Samarkand, Uzbekistan in September, India formally received the SCO rotating presidency. India will hold the presidency of the grouping for a year until September 2023.

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** had floated the concept of SECURE at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in China in 2018. Explaining the **SECURE** concept, the Prime Minister said **'S'** for security for citizens, **'E'** for economic development, **'C'** for connectivity in the region, **'U'** for unity, **'R'** for respect of sovereignty and integrity, and **'E'** for environment protection.

The **Shanghai Cooperation Organization** is a regional group of 8 countries of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan .

3. India participates in '4th meeting of Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan' held in Russia (Nov. 18, 2022)

'4th meeting of Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan'

India participated in the fourth meeting of the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan held in **Moscow** on 16 November 2022. Special Envoys and Senior Officials from **Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan** also participated in the meeting.

According to the External Affairs Ministry, the participants discussed issues related to Afghanistan. These include the current humanitarian situation and the ongoing efforts of various stakeholders to provide assistance, intra-Afghan talks, formation of an inclusive and representative government, efforts to counter threats of terrorism and ensuring regional security.

Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan

The Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, **launched in 2017**, is a regional platform on Afghanistan involving the special envoys of Russia, Afghanistan, India, Iran, China, and Pakistan.

Its mandate is to facilitate political reconciliation between the then-internationally backed Kabul government and the Taliban, establish peace, and ensure regional security.

4. Russia and Ukraine agree to further extend the Black Sea grain deal by four months (Nov. 18, 2022)

Russia and Ukraine agree to further extend

Russia and Ukraine have agreed to extend the Black sea grain deal brokered by the **United Nations** and **Turkiye** by another **120 days**. The agreement which was originally signed on 22 July 2022 was set to expire on 19 November 2022. The deal allows grain exports from the designated Ukrainian Black Sea port through a safe corridor in the Black Sea.

The agreement was reached between Russia, Ukraine, Turkiye and the United Nations at **Istanbul, Turkiye**.

The deal faced its first major crisis when Russia announced that it was suspending the agreement on [29 October 2022](#) after Ukraine attacked the Russian Black Sea Fleet near Sevastopol. However later Russia agreed to continue the deal.

The deal will continue with the existing provisions. Ships will carry grain from three Ukrainian ports of **Chornomorsk, Odesa** and **Yuzhny** .They will travel through the humanitarian corridor set up in the Black Sea and stop in Istanbul for inspection before continuing to the final destination.

The grain deal is vital for many African countries as they face crop failure due to weather extremes and internal conflicts. The nations that will benefit from the deal include Egypt , Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan Senegal, Rwanda, Congo, Libya, Tanzania and Namibia.

5. Indians no longer need police clearance for Saudi Arabia visas (Nov. 18, 2022)

Indians no longer need police clearance for Saudi Arabia visas

The Saudi Arabian embassy in India has announced that it will exempt Indian nationals from submitting a **police clearance certificate** (PCC) while applying to travel to the country. Over two million Indian citizens live in Saudi Arabia. The new rule would make visa application processing faster and easier for the Indians visiting Saudi Arabia.

According to the Saudi embassy this decision was taken as a part of the efforts of the two countries to further strengthen their relations.

A police clearance certificate is a document that Indian nationals willing to go abroad for employment, residential status, or long-term visa need to apply for if required by the visa of the destination country. The document helps in knowing the criminal record of the person.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a West Asian kingdom founded by Ibn Saud in 1923. The country is known for its oil and Islam.

- According to the BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2020, Saudi Arabia has the world's **2nd largest oil reserves** in the world after Venezuela.
- At present it is the **world's largest exporter** of crude oil.
- It has two of the holiest shrine of Islam, Mecca and Medina mosque
- The world's **largest mosque Al-Haram** or forbidden mosques is in Mecca.
- The world's second largest mosque, Mosque of the Prophet, or **Masjid al-Nabawi** is in Medina.
- The Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) headquarters is also in **Jeddah**, Saudi Arabia.

- The world's largest sand area, the **Rub al-Khali** ("Empty Quarter") which is spread around 647,500 square km, is also in Saudi Arabia.

Capital of Saudi Arabia: **Riyadh**

Currency: **Saudi Riyal**

King of Saudi Arabia: **King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**

Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia: **Mohammed bin Salman**

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Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia: **Mohammed bin Salman**

7. 5th Naturopathy Day celebrated across the nation (Nov. 18, 2022)

5th Naturopathy Day celebrated across the nation

Every year Naturopathy Day is observed on **18th November** to popularize and make people aware about the benefits of Naturopathy.

Naturopathic medicine is a system that uses natural remedies to help the body heal itself. It embraces many therapies, including herbs, massage, acupuncture, exercise, and nutritional counselling.

The term Naturopathy was used by **John Scheel of Germany in 1895** but it was and was popularized by Benedict Lust. **Benedict Lust** is known as the father of modern-day Naturopathy.

Background to the Day

It was on this day that Mahatma Gandhi founded the All India Nature Cure Foundation trust on **November 18, 1945**. Gandhi ji is considered the **founding figure of Naturopathy** in India, as it was largely through his efforts that this practice became popular in India.

The **first** Naturopathy day was observed in India on **18 November 2018**,

Naturopathy Day 2022

The main event was organized at the **National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune**. On the occasion a special cover envelope was released to commemorate the 5th Naturopathy Day.

Gandhi memento was given to the cycle rallies participants, which originated from New Delhi, Wardha and Hyderabad and converging at Pune. Certificates were given to the Startup Yoga Challenge winners. Students from more than 25 colleges participated in the event with faculties. The program concluded with Mallkhambh presentation.

Theme of the Naturopathy Day 2022

The theme of the Naturopathy day 2022 was: **Naturopathy: An Integrative Medicine.**

8. APEC summit disrupted in Bangkok due to North Korean ICBM test (Nov. 18, 2022)

APEC summit disrupted in Bangkok due to North Korean ICBM test

The **29th** summit meeting of the **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)** being held in **Bangkok**, Thailand was briefly interrupted on 18 November 2022 as they condemned the [North Korea](#) for its fresh test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). ICBM is a land based nuclear capable ballistic missile with a range of 5,600 Km or more.

The two-day (18 & 19 November) summit meeting was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Thailand **Prayuth Chan-ocha** on 18 November 2022.

The U.S. Vice President **Kamala Harris** called an emergency gathering of leaders from Australia, Japan, South Korea, Canada and New Zealand on the sidelines of the summit after North Korea carried out the missile test just an hour before its inauguration.

This is the third summit level meeting in the Asia Pacific region within a month after the **East Asia Summit** in Cambodia and **G-20 summit at Bali**, Indonesia.

Russia is a member of both G20 and APEC but **President Vladimir Putin** has stayed away from the summits. First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov is representing him at APEC.

The next Summit meeting will be held in the **United States of America** in 2023.

India is not a member of APEC.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum with 21 member economies across Asia-Pacific region.

It was set up in **1989** to promote regional economic integration under a non-legally binding manner and friendly environment.

APEC group countries account for 38% of the global population, 62% of world's gross domestic product and 48% of the world trade.

21 Member of APEC are:

Australia; Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand; United States, China; Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei(Taiwan), Mexico ,Papua New Guinea ,Chile , Peru; Russia; and Vietnam.

Headquarters: **Singapore**

9. India fastest growing market for Microsoft owned professional networking site LinkedIn (Nov. 18, 2022)

India fastest growing LinkedIn

The **Microsoft** owned business networking service company LinkedIn Chief Executive Officer **Ryan Roslansky** has said that India has become LinkedIn's **fastest-growing market** as more and more companies and advertisers come online, with sales in the country rising at a 50% year-on-year .

He was speaking at the sidelines of the Bloomberg New Economy Forum meeting in Singapore.

He said that LinkedIn is looking for new business opportunities outside the United States as the economic situation in the United States is expected to become worse.

The majority of LinkedIn's growth is happening outside of the United States, he said, adding that new members are joining the networking site in markets such as India, Indonesia and Western Europe.

LinkedIn is a social network of professionals designed to help people make business connections, share their experiences and resumes, and find jobs.

10. Paralympics-IPC suspends Russian, Belarusian committees with immediate effect (Nov. 18, 2022)

Paralympics-IPC suspends Russian, Belarusian

The **International Paralympic Committee** has suspended the National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) of **Russia** and **Belarus** with immediate effect on November 17, 2022, dashing the hopes of para-athletes competing in the 2024 Paralympics.

Important facts

- Earlier athletes from both countries were barred from competing in the **Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympics** in March.
- Russia's suspension was passed by 64 votes against 39 at the IPC's Extraordinary General Assembly in Berlin.
- The suspension of the NPC of Belarus passed by 54 votes against 45.
- Both NPCs have been suspended for "inability to comply with their membership obligations under the IPC constitution".
- Due to the suspension, NPC Russia and NPC Belarus lose all rights and privileges of IPC membership, as per the IPC constitution.
- The Russian team was also banned from the **Rio Paralympics in 2016** over doping.
- NPC Russia and NPC Belarus have the right to appeal against this decision.

About International Paralympic Committee

- It was established on **22 September 1989** as an international non-profit organisation.
- It is an athlete-centred organisation composed of an elected Governing Board, a Management Team and various Standing Committees and Councils.
- Its objective is to enable Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and to inspire and excite the world.
- Headquartered - **Bonn, Germany**
- President - **Andrew Parsons**